

People from the Mourne and Slieve Croob feel strongly about their culture and heritage and are justifiably proud of the area's tradition of nurturing the finest produce, from both the land and the sea.

Agricultural and fishing ways of life in the region present an interesting combination of old and new practices. Distinctive traditional skills, crafts and customs related to the natural landscape here survived in this once isolated area.

In the past the Mourne area had to be almost self-sufficient by trading livestock and agricultural produce through the fairs. Other essential needs were supplemented by goods bought from the peddler, the travelling tinker and the smuggler.

Times of course have changed. Mourne and indeed Northern Ireland have not been self-reliant for decades. However with increasing awareness of health, food quality and environmental issues it is important that the benefits of producing, consuming and promoting the local produce of the area are understood and appreciated.

Mourne Branding Forum

The Mourne Branding Forum comprises representatives of a number of Mourne interests. The forum is keen to promote local products and services as well as promoting the concept of a 'Mourne Brand'.

This initiative aims to highlight the traditional crafts and products of the Mourne and Slieve Croob Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) as unique and distinctive. In the long term a regional brand could provide very real economic benefits. We hope to achieve this by encouraging collective action from food, craft, hospitality, tourism businesses and the local community to encourage use and showcasing of local produce and to put in place the foundation steps necessary to establish a brand identity.

How we propose to promote the use of local products and branding

- Audit local products.
- Produce an online directory of local producers.
- Arrange an event to showcase local products - 'Meet the Buyer'.
- Organise a study visit to an area that has implemented a successful branding initiative.

- Encourage local eating establishments to offer dishes based on local produce.
- Personalise products through stories about local life.

Benefits of buying locally

There are many benefits to buying your food locally. Potential benefits include:

Consumers

Support for the Local Economy - keeping your money in the local economy by buying locally safeguards and creates jobs and adds to local economic growth.

Fewer Food Miles - fewer transport miles between the producer and your plate means that the environmental impact of transporting your food is reduced.

Freshness and Seasonality - buying directly from local producers will ensure that your produce will be fresh and in season.

Traceability - by buying locally produced food you can be confident of where and how your food has been grown, reared, processed, packaged and handled during its journey to your plate.

Distinctiveness - sampling produce and enjoying crafts that are related to the landscape, traditions and special qualities of the area.

Continued overleaf...

We'd like to hear from you

If you are interested in this project, would like to become involved or simply be kept updated, please complete the form below and return it to Mourne Heritage Trust. (Address on the back of this leaflet).

Please tick

- Consumer/Personal Interest
 Business Interest

Please indicate the nature of your business

- Arable Producer
 Livestock Producer
 Seafood Producer
 Food Outlet – restaurant/café etc
 Retail Outlet – shop/market etc
 Tourism Business e.g. accommodation, activity visitor attraction

- Crafts Producer
 Other

(please specify)

Your details

Contact name

Organisation/Business name (if applicable)

Address

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Telephone number

Mobile number

Email address

Preferred method of contact: Post Email



Photo courtesy of The Highpoint Group



Photo courtesy of Castlewelan Farmers' Market



Photo courtesy of Tory Bush Self Catering Cottages

